

CONGRESSWOMAN

Carolyn McCarthy

Education Accomplishments - 107th Congress

As a member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy works to provide educational opportunities for all Americans. Congresswoman McCarthy truly believes real Homeland Security begins with our children's education. In the 107th Congress, she was very successful in achieving her goals.

Every Monday, Congresswoman McCarthy visits schools in her district to stay in touch with Long Island's future generations. Congresswoman McCarthy also recognizes schools that demonstrate a unique contribution to Long Island education each month through her School of the Month program. Congresswoman McCarthy honors Schools of the Month with a speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as bestowing a Congressional Proclamation of Distinction award.

DELIVERED RESULTS FOR THE FUTURE—PASSED KEY EDUCATION LAW

HR 1, The Leave No Child Behind Act was signed into law in January 2002. This bill re-authorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, the primary bill funding education. The House Education Committee made great strides in boosting funding with a \$4 billion increase. Congresswoman McCarthy's special programs follow.

ESEA IMPROVES TEACHER QUALITY

- √ All states must have a four-year plan in place to ensure teachers are fully qualified. Each school district must report on their progress, and federal education funds must be focused on reaching this goal. The bill authorizes new investments and stronger commitments to teacher professional development, support and mentoring.
- √ Congresswoman McCarthy proposed a Teacher Mentoring Program to partner veteran teachers with new teachers. Right now an overwhelming majority of teachers leave the profession within the first five years. Her mentoring program will ensure new teachers

get the support they need when they start out.

ESEA EXPANDS AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy knows students are most vulnerable to crime between the hours of 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Following that, Congresswoman McCarthy is mindful that as standards for education rise, the assistance given to students must also rise. For both reasons, Congresswoman McCarthy successfully passed an after school amendment to solve these problems. After school programs give parents peace of mind, keeps students safe, while preparing them for future studies with additional learning time.

ESEA FUNDS SCHOOL NURSES

- √ In February of 2000, a school shooting and the death of a first-grader prompted Congresswoman McCarthy to question if a school nurse could have helped save the child's life. Subsequently she learned not every school has a school nurse. In fact, only 14 states mandate a nurse in every school.
- √ A nurse herself, Congresswoman McCarthy understands school nurses are on the front lines identifying neglect, abuse, malnutrition and mental health issues for children. That's why she proposed an amendment to give states the option to use funding to hire school nurses. Congresswoman McCarthy was proud that ESEA included her amendment to allow schools to use federal dollars to pay for their school nurse.

ESEA ESTABLISHES ACADEMIC INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy knows many students need additional help during the school day. She created a program to allow schools to use funds to create academic intervention programs for most at-risk students, including those who fail to meet the state academic standards, and students not completing secondary school. The programs will be run with the assistance of community-based organizations, and will be conducted during the school day. The activities include tutoring, counseling, mentoring, enrichment activities and college and career counseling. Congresswoman McCarthy believes this important part of the education law will help many of children get the education they deserve.

Other Important Provisions of the Leave No Child Behind Act:

- √ *Alternative Education Programs*—Congresswoman McCarthy believes it is important to remove troubled students from the classroom, but she is adamant schools provide alternative education to these students. The Leave No Child Behind bill allows schools to use federal dollars to provide alternative education for their at risk youth.
- √ *CPR Training Programs in Schools*—As a nurse, Congresswoman McCarthy believes teachers should be able to administer basic life saving techniques. Now schools can choose to provide CPR training to teachers.
- √ *Reduce Class Size*—While visiting schools in her district each week, Congresswoman McCarthy has seen firsthand the benefits more teachers and smaller classes have on student education. The Leave No Child Behind bill gives schools the choice to spend federal education dollars to reduce class size.

Passed amendment in Education Committee, The September 11 Surviving Spouses Loan Forgiveness amendment, this amendment was attached to H.R. 5091, the CLASS

Act, and is Congresswoman McCarthy's legislation to provide student loan forgiveness to the surviving spouses of the firemen, policemen, emergency response teams, and military victims of the September 11, 2001, tragedies. Currently, the individual who died has their loan forgiven, but not the spouse who may have relied on the working spouse to pay the loans. The bill:

- requires the Department of Education to forgive direct and consolidated loans of all the victims of September 11.
- authorizes the Secretary of Education to discharge or cancel Federal Student Loan indebtedness of an eligible spouse.
- ensures the federal government must do everything in its power to help ease the financial burden our brave men and women may endure while they fight overseas to rid the world of terrorism, as well as other affected by the tragic events of September 11. Relieving a student loan expense helps financially strained spouses provide for their children as well as themselves during this difficult time.

PROTECTING NEW YORKERS EDUCATION

Congresswoman McCarthy knows the devastation of picking up the pieces after a tragedy strikes That is why she introduced:

KEEPING OUR STUDENTS SAFE

Congresswoman McCarthy was shocked when she first learned of the lack of information collected when a crime is committed on school grounds. Right now, if a student brings a gun to school and shoots someone, it is recorded as an incidence of violence. Likewise, if another student stabs a classmate with a fork, it is *also* recorded as an incidence of violence. No differentiation is made between these two acts of violence, even though they are drastically different. No information is recorded with regards to the type of weapon used, how many and if anyone was injured, or if the victim has any relationship to the perpetrator.

Congresswoman McCarthy knows this is not exactly a comprehensive look at what is going on in our schools. Since coming to Congress, Congresswoman McCarthy has worked to pass legislation to collect data on the use of guns in schools. In March of this year, the House Education Committee, finally passed a bill funding the studies of several important data collecting agencies within the Department of Education, including the National Center for Education Statistics. **H.R. 3801, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002** includes her data collection amendment.

PROVIDING BETTER ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Congresswoman McCarthy believes one of the best ways to help our students is make Higher Education more accessible, more comprehensive and family-friendly.

H.R. 678 Student Loan Interest Deduction Bill, is Congresswoman McCarthy's bill to increase the amount a student can deduct from their taxes for their student loans.

- Increases the allowable student loan deduction to \$5,000
- Eliminates the current 60 month limitation on student loan interest
- Increases the current income threshold for phase out to \$100,000 for single filers and \$150,000 for married couples filing jointly.

√ **HR. 1162, 21st Century Higher Education Act**, re-authorizes higher education.

KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO OUR STUDENTS

In 1975, Congress passed a law—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—that authorized the federal government to cover 40 percent of the costs of special education to provide all students with disabilities with a free and appropriate public education. To date, however, the government has never provided more than 16 percent.

While funding has increased over the last few years, the increases have not been sufficient to address adequately the cost of providing special education services. As Congresswoman McCarthy visits her schools each week, she hears from teachers, parents, and students everyone is suffering as a result of the federal government renegeing on its commitment to fund 40 percent of special education costs. She supports full funding for IDEA and is working hard to pass:

√ **H.R. 737, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**, which provides full funding for the education of all children with disabilities.

Other important education legislation to Congresswoman McCarthy:

√ **H.R. 73, Early Prevention of Dyslexia in Children Act of 2001**, directs the Secretary of Education to study and report to Congress on methods for identifying and treating children with dyslexia in kindergarten through third grade.

H.R. 756, Quality After-School Expansion Act of 2001 is Congresswoman McCarthy's bill to provide funding for before and afterschool funding.

- Provides \$1 billion in grants to schools to provide before and afterschool programs to students

√ **H.R. 117, Math and Science Improvement Act**, gives incentives to schools to improve their math and sciences programs.

- √ **H.R. 537, The National Commission on Youth Violence Act**, establishes the National Commission on Youth Crime and School Violence to make recommendations on how to deter youth crime and protect children from violence in schools.
- √ **H.R. 687, Teacher Loan Forgiveness**, increases student loans forgiveness to teachers who choose to teach in under served school districts.
- √ **H.R. 1076, America's Better Classroom Act**, expands the incentives for the construction and renovation of public schools.
- √ **H.R. 1718, National Museum of African American History and Culture Act**, establishes the National Museum of African American History and Culture.